



Issue #3  
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# Song of Saya




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THEY BEGAN TO SOUND THE WAY  
THEY LOOKED. WARPED, GARBLED  
LAYERS OF UGLY WHITE NOISE  
FADING IN AND OUT.

THE TASTE OF BURNT COPPER SOURED THE BACK  
OF MY TONGUE. THE AIR CLUNG TO ME LIKE A  
VISCIOUS MEMBRANE. I WAS CONSTANTLY BATHED  
IN A STICKY RESIDUE OF COLD SWEAT. IT SMELLED  
LIKE THE DRAINAGE OF A SLAUGHTERHOUSE.

TO ADD TO THE CONFUSION, PEOPLE WERE AFTER  
US. THEY WANTED WHAT I HAD. BUT TAKING THAT  
AWAY FROM ME WOULD'VE BEEN LIKE RIPPING THE  
BAND-AID FROM A FESTERING WOUND. I WOULDN'T  
LET THEM. I COULDN'T. SAYA WAS THE ONLY  
ANCHOR I HAD TO THE REAL WORLD.

I GUESS THIS IS THE  
PRICE OF TRUE LOVE...



From: MARK CEL. Txt: Joshua,  
got away! pls meet Norman Pri,  
S Gate asap.

MARCUS GOT  
AWAY. ALWAYS  
THE BOY SCOUT.

HE'S HERE.

WHAT IF  
SOMEONE ELSE  
SENT THE  
MESSAGE?

IT'S HIM.  
TRUST ME.





MMM...  
UHHH...

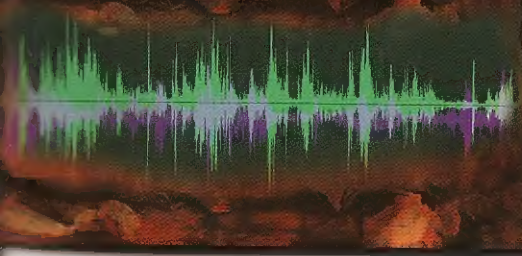
BING

NO!  
MAKE IT  
STOP!

YOU ARE  
UNIQUE, MARK.  
YOU SEE WHAT NO  
ONE ELSE CAN  
SEE. WE'RE ALL  
COUNTING ON  
YOU.

DON'T WORRY. LET  
ME READJUST AND  
SHOW YOU SOMETHING  
MAGNIFICENT.

THANK YOU  
FOR HELPING  
ME SAVE  
HIM.





THERE  
HE IS...

...MARCUS!  
OVER HERE!

GYAH!  
OH... JOSH?  
I— JOSHUA! HEY...  
HEY, MAN...

I'M FINE. THEY...  
IT'S GONNA BE OKAY,  
JOSH. YOU JUST  
GOTTA... YOU GOTTA  
COME WITH ME.

MARK— JESUS,  
WHAT HAPPENED  
TO YOU?

NO, I THINK  
WE'LL TALK RIGHT  
HERE.

OH, MY GOD...  
IT'S REAL... IT'S  
HER... GET AWAY,  
JOSH!

SHE'S RIGHT  
THERE! RIGHT  
BEHIND HIM!

WHAT ARE  
YOU SAYING?  
WHO ARE YOU  
TALKING TO?!

SCREECH!

DO YOU  
SEE IT?!  
HURRY!



YOU'RE GONNA  
HELP HIM, RIGHT? YOU  
SAID YOU WERE GONNA  
HELP HIM!

SHUT UP  
AND GET IN  
THE VAN!

PUT HER IN  
THE BOX AND  
MAKE IT  
QUICK!

**BLAM**

TANNER!  
GODDAMN  
YOU!

GET IT IN  
BEFORE IT  
WAKES UP!

WE WILL IF  
HE SHOOTS THAT  
MOTHERFUCKER!

**BLAM  
BLAM**

WHAT ABOUT  
THIS GUY?

**SPLCH**

FORGET HIM,  
WE GOT WHAT WE  
CAME FOR!

URGGHH...

...SAYA...  
OH GOD,  
SAYA...

DAMN IT, MARK. NOW WHAT?  
NO ONE TO TRUST. NO ONE  
TO TURN TO.



...STILL CANNOT CONFIRM THE EXACT NATURE OF WHAT IS BEING CALLED "A POSSIBLE INCIDENT" AROUND 10 THIS MORNING IN NORMAN PARK. NEITHER LAW ENFORCEMENT NOR THE MAYOR'S OFFICE HAVE RELEASED ANY STATEMENTS. EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS CONFLICT WITH...

THUMP  
THUMP

JOSH,  
OH MY...

HELP ME.  
PLEASE.

I TOLD CARLY EVERYTHING.  
SAYA. OJAI AND HIS DIARY.

WHY AREN'T  
YOU CALLING THE  
POLICE YET?  
ORDER A PSYCH  
EVAL?

MARK ASKED  
ME TO CHECK ON  
ROCHELLE. I CALLED  
HER FAMILY, THEY WERE  
TOLD SHE DIED. THE  
HOSPITAL LISTS HER  
AS TRANSFERRED.  
WHY?


THEY  
TOOK HER,  
TOO.

I WATCHED HER  
AS SHE READ.


I WANT TO  
UNDERSTAND,  
JOSH. LET ME  
READ THE  
DIARY.

SHE TRIED TO HIDE HER TEARS.  
SAID SHE NEEDED A MOMENT.







NO, HE JUST  
SHOWED UP HERE. HE'S  
ARMED AND PARANOID. ON  
AND ON ABOUT HOW YOU  
AND DR. TANNER HAVE IT  
IN FOR HIM. I'M SCARED  
TO DEATH.




GIVE ME YOUR  
ADDRESS, I'LL  
SEND SOMEONE...



NO! HE'S EXPECTING ME  
TO TAKE HIM SOMEWHERE  
SAFE. MAYBE THERE'S A  
POLICE STATION...




LET ME GIVE YOU  
AN ADDRESS. YOU'LL  
BE SAFE AND HE'LL  
GET THE HELP HE  
NEEDS.



WHO WERE  
YOU TALKING  
TO?

SHULTZ GAVE  
ME AN ADDRESS. IT'S  
REMOTE. I'M BETTING  
THAT'S WHERE THEY  
TOOK THE PATIENTS.  
AND MARK.


AND HER.



THANK  
YOU. I'LL  
LEAVE...

WITH ME.  
RIGHT NOW.





FINALLY, WE MEET AGAIN. THE PLEASURE IS ALL MINE, OF COURSE. I DON'T KNOW IF YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT AN EXCITING TIME THIS IS. SAYA? MAY I BE SO BOLD AS TO CALL YOU BY NAME?

YOUR MERE PRESENCE CHALLENGES OUR BELIEFS, OUR REALITY, PERHAPS OUR VERY EXISTENCE. SO MANY QUESTIONS...

...THERE ARE IMPORTANT PEOPLE, INCREDIBLE PEOPLE JUST WAITING FOR YOUR ANSWERS.

MAYBE YOU CAN'T RESPOND, BUT I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. I'M SORRY TO HAVE TO DO THIS TO YOU. I HOPE IT'S NOT TOO UNCOMFORTABLE.

WE LEARNED ABOUT THE SOUND YOU EMIT AND WE'VE COUNTERED THAT WITH OUR OWN FREQUENCY. IT BALANCES THINGS OUT, SO TO SPEAK. WE CAN'T HAVE YOU RUNNING AROUND RAMPANT NOW, CAN WE? NO, THERE'S NO PROGRESS IN THAT.

FATHER...  
JOSH...

AH, YES. YOU WANT TO SEE YOUR FRIENDS. I UNDERSTAND. DESPITE WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW ABOUT ME, I CAN BE A FAIR MAN.



CARLY AND I MADE A DEAL ON THE WAY. SHE WOULD DRIVE ME HERE, THEN TURN STRAIGHT AROUND.

GET BACK IN THE CAR AND DRIVE HOME. YOU PROMISED ME, DAMN IT.

RELAX, I'LL SEE YOU OFF AT THE GATE TO THE LION'S DEN.

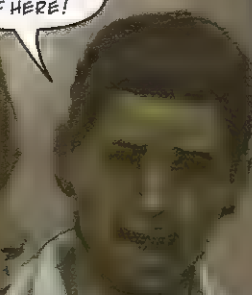
I KNOW WHERE I NEED TO GO. I CAN SEE IT.

I'LL SNEAK IN BEHIND THE AMBULANCE. YOU GO BACK TO THE CAR.

OKAY, GOOD LUCK.

*CRASH*






WHAT THE  
FUCK? GET OUT  
OF HERE!

COULD I HAVE DONE MORE?  
FORCED HER TO TURN AROUND?

NOT BEFORE I  
KNOW WHAT THE  
HELL THEY'RE  
UP TO.

THAT QUESTION WILL  
FOREVER HAUNT ME.



HOW MANY  
OF THESE POOR  
SCHMUCKS WE FILLETED  
AND PREPPED?  
I'M AT 19.

WE'LL  
KEEP 'EM  
COMING.




SO GLAD  
YOU'RE BOTH  
HERE.

JOSH, YOU'LL BE  
AFFORDED THE BEST CARE  
IMAGINABLE. WE'LL HELP YOU.  
MARK, IF YOU'D KEEP MISS  
PARKER COMPANY?

CARLY DOESN'T  
KNOW A THING.  
THERE'S NO  
NEED TO—






AH, MR. JOSH MULLEN! WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...




JOSH..



HOLD ON, WE STILL HAVE ONE MORE GUEST. I'D LIKE TO PRESENT DR. CHARLES OJAI.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?! LET HER OUT!

FATHER!



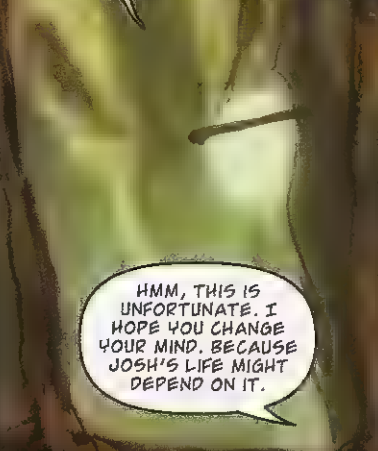
...SAYASAYAS  
AYASAYASAYA  
SAYA...

NOTHING TO SAY TO YOU...


OJAI'S BRAIN FUNCTION WAS ALREADY DETERIORATING WHEN WE BROUGHT HIM HERE. WE LEARNED THAT **SAYA** GIVES OFF SOMETHING AKIN TO **RADIATION POISONING**. IT SEEMS THE PRICE TO PAY FOR SEEING OTHER WORLDS IS **MADNESS**. WELCOME TO YOUR FUTURE, JOSH.

THAT'S ALL HE EVER SAYS.


NOW YOU CAN SEE I'M A MAN OF MY WORD. FAIR IS FAIR. I WISH TO BEGIN A DIALOGUE...



HMM, THIS IS UNFORTUNATE. I HOPE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND. BECAUSE JOSH'S LIFE MIGHT DEPEND ON IT.




HOW DO YOU SEE **SAYA**? WE DON'T KNOW WHY YET, BUT IT TAKES ON DIFFERENT FORMS FOR DIFFERENT PEOPLE. DO YOU SEE A BEAUTIFUL GIRL?



DO YOU KNOW WHAT **SAYA** REALLY LOOKS LIKE? ITS TRUE IDENTITY? COME NOW, THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU...





WHAT ARE  
THEY GOING TO  
DO TO HIM?

SHHHH...  
CARLY. IT'S ME.  
WE BOTH ONLY  
WANT THE BEST  
FOR JOSHUA.

WE HAVE TO BE STRONG  
FOR HIM. I'M SCARED TOO.  
BUT WE'RE HERE FOR...  
EACH OTHER.

THEY'RE  
GOING TO HURT  
HIM!

DON'T...

PLEASE...

DOESN'T...  
THAT... FEEL...  
BETTER? WE  
TAKE CARE...  
OF... EACH...

...STOP... WHAT  
DID I—CARLY? I  
DIDN'T MEAN, NO,  
STOP... MAKE ME  
STOP!








YOU ARE THE MONSTERS! ALL OF YOU!



WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!

SAYA... DO YOU  
KNOW HOW TO  
FEEL ANGER?  
OR HATE?





YOU IDIOT! YOU  
DON'T KNOW WHAT  
YOU'RE DEALING  
WITH!

I'M SORRY. I KNOW  
OJAI TRIED TO SHIELD  
YOU FROM THE EVIL THAT  
MEN DO. BUT IF YOU WANT TO  
UNDERSTAND HUMAN BEINGS,  
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND  
THOSE EMOTIONS  
AS WELL.

HER WORDS WERE LOST ON  
ME. ALL I SAW WAS RED. ALL  
I HEARD WERE SCREAMS.

FORGIVE ME,  
FATHER...

SAHA? SAHA... SA...  
SAHASAHASAYA...


I NEED TO  
SAY GOODBYE  
TO HIM.

CRACK

THEY DID THIS  
TO HIM. THEY DID  
THIS TO US.

THEN I WANT  
TO KILL THEM.  
EVERY SINGLE  
ONE...





THEY CREATED MONSTERS IN BOTH OF  
US. AND THEY WERE ABOUT TO REAP  
THE FRUITS OF THEIR LABORS.

THEY WERE NOT HUMAN TO ME  
ANYMORE. THEY WERE JUST MEAT.  
JUST LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD.

THINGS WERE NEVER AS CLEAR TO ME AS  
THEY WERE AT THAT MOMENT. MAYBE IT  
WAS ACCEPTANCE. MAYBE IT WAS INSANITY...

KRASH

BLAM

GROG

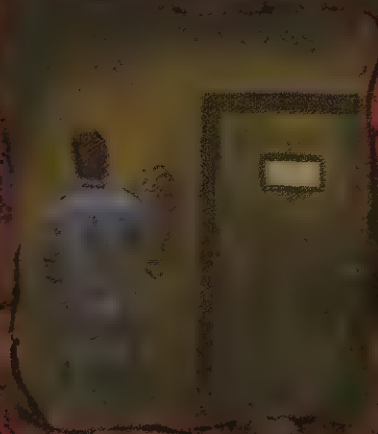
CRASH






BOOM

SHRRR



WHO'S IN HERE?  
ROCHELLE? IS  
THAT YOU?

ZWACK



DOCTOR?  
WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
HERE?



YOU'RE  
FREE NOW.  
GO.



JOSHUA! WE GOTTA  
HAVE A TALK. I MEAN,  
A SERIOUS TALK.

WHO IS  
THAT?

GAAHHH!

ENOUGH BULLSHIT! IT  
GOT TO HIM, MARK. IT'S  
NOT JOSH ANYMORE. YOU  
HAVE TO KILL THE MONSTER,  
YOU HEAR ME? KILL THE  
MONSTER!

NO! JOSH? WHAT...  
IS THAT THING?! YOU  
SAID YOU WERE GONNA  
HELP HIM. WHAT HAVE  
YOU DONE WITH HIM?!  
LET GO OF HIM... LET  
HIM GO!

MARK? WHAT  
THE —

IT WAS ONE OF THEM COMING FOR  
ME... BUT FOR A BRIEF SECOND I  
SAW MARK. YET IT WASN'T MARK.

MARK! THIS  
ISN'T YOU!  
FIGHT IT!

IT HURTS...  
IT HURTS!

DON'T LET  
THEM CONTROL  
YOU! DON'T LET  
THEM WIN!

GET UP AND  
KILL HIM! NOW,  
YOU COWARD!

DON'T LISTEN  
TO HER! SHE'S  
FUCKING WITH  
YOUR HEAD!

SHUT UP...  
EVERYONE... SHUT  
UP! NO, I CAN'T...  
I CAN'T TAKE IT  
ANYMORE!



CAN'T...

SNL

UNNGGHHH!

MARK—NOOO!

THIS MONSTROSITY BEFORE ME. IT'S TANNER, ISN'T IT? I KNOW YOUR STENCH ANYWHERE. YOU WANNA SEE ANOTHER WORLD? I'LL SEND YOU THERE. TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.

HOLD ON, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND...


SNL

I'M SORRY... SO SORRY... PLEASE... FORGIVE ME... DIDN'T MEAN TO... HURT ANYONE... JOSHUA...  
FORGIVE ME

WRONG.  
THIS IS ALL I UNDERSTAND...

WHEN HE DIED, IT FELT LIKE THE LAST BIT OF MY HUMANITY DIED WITH HIM.





HELP ME! RESEARCH  
MUST BE PRESERVED. THE  
BREAKTHROUGH... WE'RE  
THERE. NOW WE MUST  
KNOW!

JOSH...

WHAT...  
IS...

IF YOU MUST  
KNOW, I'LL  
SHOW YOU.

AAAAARRRGHHH









STOP!

LEAVE HER  
ALONE, YOU FUCKING  
ABERRATION! GET  
BACK!

IT'S ME...  
JOSH? JOSH!

IT'S VILE.  
JUST LET ME  
KILL IT. IT NEEDS  
TO BE DONE.

NO. NO  
MORE KILLING.  
IT'S OVER.

DID THEY  
DO THIS TO  
HIM? OR WAS  
IT YOU?

BUT IT TRIED  
TO ATTACK YOU,  
TO TAKE YOU  
FROM ME.

WORDS WON'T MEAN  
ANYTHING NOW. TAKE THE  
DOCUMENTS SOMEWHERE SAFE.  
STUDY THEM. THERE'S STILL  
HOPE. HURRY NOW. AND  
DON'T LOOK BACK.

HE CAN'T EVEN  
SEE ME ANYMORE...  
HE... YOU NEED  
TO TELL HIM...  
THAT I...





QUICK,  
INTO THE  
FOREST!

YOUR TOUCH...  
IT DOESN'T MAKE  
IT GO AWAY  
ANYMORE.

BUT AS LONG  
AS I HAVE YOU WITH  
ME, EVERYTHING—  
ANYTHING—WILL  
BE OKAY.

NO, MY LOVE, IT'S  
ME. YOU'RE ALMOST  
GONE. WHAT I DID TO  
OJAI... I CAN'T LET  
THAT HAPPEN TO  
YOU. I WON'T.


THAT WON'T  
HAPPEN TO US. IT'LL  
BE DIFFERENT.

NO. YOU'LL LOSE MORE  
AND MORE OF YOURSELF. I'M  
TAKING IT FROM YOU. BUT DO  
YOU REMEMBER THE MAN  
THAT ATTACKED ME AT  
YOUR HOUSE?

YOU TURNED  
HIM INTO A  
MONSTER.

BUT  
HE LOOKED  
NORMAL TO  
YOU.





THANK YOU FOR SHOWING  
ME SO MUCH **BEAUTY**, JOSH,  
I'LL ALWAYS TREASURE IT.  
NOW I'LL RETURN IT TO YOU.  
ALL FOR YOU. HOLD ON TO IT  
FOR BOTH OF US. I LOVE  
YOU. I LOVE YOU...


NO! SAYA! PLEASE  
DON'T GO! I NEED YOU!  
SAAAAAAYAAAA!

JUST THEN, I FINALLY  
SAW WHAT I KNEW TO  
BE HER TRUE FORM.

AS SHE ASCENDED IT  
BEGAN TO SNOW. THE  
SNOW BROUGHT BEAUTY.

IT HASN'T STOPPED  
SNOWING SINCE.



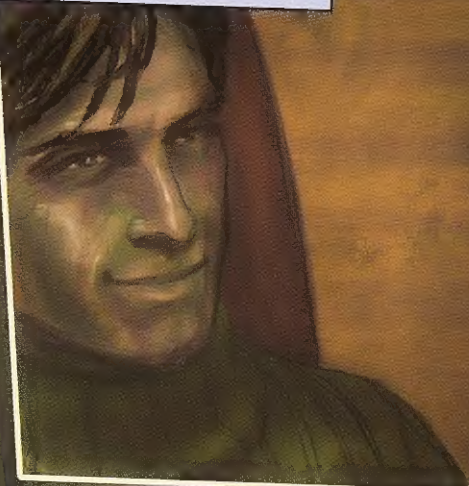
A soft, painterly illustration of a winter scene. In the foreground, a snow-covered mountain slope leads down to a small, rustic log cabin. The cabin has a warm, yellow light emanating from its large windows, where a person is visible sitting in a chair. The background features more snow-covered mountains and evergreen trees under a pale, hazy sky. Snowflakes are gently falling throughout the scene.

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN LOVE?


THE WORLD CAN BE A COLD, DARK AND SCARY PLACE. SOMETIMES YOU NEED SOMEONE TO HELP YOU MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL. TO GUIDE YOU. TO GIVE YOU HOPE.

HAVE YOU FOUND THE ONE PERSON WHO CAN DO THOSE THINGS? I HAVE. I FOUND THE LOVE OF MY LIFE. MY SOUL MATE, THAT ONE PERSON WHO MAKES IT ALL WORTHWHILE. AND SHE'LL BE HERE SOON...

I WANT EVERYTHING TO BE PERFECT FOR HER WHEN SHE ARRIVES. NOTHING OUT OF PLACE. EVERYTHING PRISTINE. JUST THE WAY SHE MADE IT FOR ME.







SO I WAIT PATIENTLY. SHE'LL  
BE HERE SOON. I KNOW IT...

ANY MINUTE NOW...





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